

REMARKS

The present communication is responsive to the Official Action mailed December 2, 2003. A petition for a one-month extension of the term for response to said Official Action, to and including April 2, 2004, is transmitted herewith.

The Examiner's indication that claims 15-33 and 70-74 are allowed is noted with appreciation.

Claims 1, 4-6 inclusive, 10, 12, 68 and 69 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by *Scarpa*, U.S. Patent 3,433,461 or *Hartmann*, U.S. Patent 3,383,152. Claims 2, 3, 7-9, 11, 13 and 14 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

By the present amendment, claims 9, 68 and 69 have been canceled, whereas claim 1 has been rewritten to incorporate the recitations of claim 9, as well as the recitations originally presented in claim 1. Claim 1, thus, corresponds to original claim 9 presented in independent form, and is accordingly believed allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indication, as set forth in the Official Action. As each of the previously rejected claims 4-6, 10 and 12 depends, directly or indirectly, from allowable, amended independent claim 1, these claims are also believed to be allowable.

A typographical error has been corrected in claim 13. See paragraph 0036 of the specification, and the expression " $r_1$ " originally incorporated in the formula set forth in claim 13.

Non-elected claims 34-67 have been canceled without prejudice to applicants' right to present the same in a divisional application.

As it is believed that all of the objections, rejections and requirements set forth in the Official Action have been fully met by the foregoing amendments and remarks,

favorable reconsideration and issuance of a notice of allowance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: April 2, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By   
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